

***Public Comments Received on the NH Rail Plan as of October 17, 2011***

I was wondering if there has been any consideration about re-establishing freight and passenger service from Pease Tradeport Center and Port to Manchester? I think that rail freight service between the two manufacturing towns and then tying into the existing freight rail there to Nashua might allow for better transport of goods from the Pease port. Also the line could be used to carry people on excursion trains from Nashua, Manchester and Concord to Hampton and other sea coast towns in the summer. Just a thought.

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Hello, With the large population on the seacoast and with Boston as the most likely destination, I would like to suggest the state look more closely at the Portsmouth to Boston route. The Downeaster is more expensive and does not have enough daily trips to get more cars off the roads. Commuter rail is the best answer for the 95 corridor and we should look at extending the MBTA from Newburyport to Portsmouth. I know that the major stopping block is a bridge over the Merrimack River and is located in Mass., but it is the best route and should be considered.

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As a business owner, resident and taxpayer here in Dover, NH, I support the railways 100%! I urge you, your committee, and Governor Lynch to allocate whatever money is needed to facilitate bringing back Passenger and Freight trains throughout the entire state! Here in Dover, it is absolutely wonderful to be able to have access to the local train station and to the Amtrak Downeaster. Having an active railway here brings with it business, convenience, vitality, uniqueness and a strong sense of progress that is much needed during these times! We very consistently meet people who ride the rails from Portland, Boston and places in between to visit our town and patronize our businesses. I am also well aware of how much money could be saved and/or reallocated over time, as we transition the heavy Freight that is now carried over our roadways and bridges to railways.

I applaud you for help and hard work and we must not allow Special Interest to interfere with this very important debate!

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I encourage NH to invest in the future of rail transportation. We should be committed to rail transport, especially lines to Boston and south for people who commute and/or wish to visit, etc. I would be thrilled to have a rail line from Manchester to Boston. Public transportation in NH is severely under served. With the economics and conservation of resources we should be putting our time and finances towards moving public transportation forward.

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I would like to provide the following input to the NHSRP:

1. I believe that we should agree on a state policy – part of a national policy – to try to decrease dependency on the automobile for daily commuting by a concomitant increase in passenger rail service. Of course, previous analysis of this overall policy objective needs to be reviewed carefully – but the work does not need to be redone. Some of the benefits will be:

- Reduction in oil consumption;
- Reduction in greenhouse (carbon) emissions;
- Reduction in accidents, given an aging population, with associated medical costs associated with injuries;
- Reduction in stress (riding is less stressful than driving in traffic);
- Gain in workforce productivity– because when you drive you cannot work; but when you ride the train, equipped with a work-table for each passenger and, with wireless service - you can work!
- More affordable (currently, it costs \$17 for seniors to make the trip from Portland to Boston);
- Increase in high-technology workforce due to new rail technology jobs;
- Increased tourism to Boston (and to New Hampshire) if rail is available.

Finally, riding the train can be enjoyable: routes are often scenic; one can relax; read or work; eat; socialize, and move about occasionally;

2. I would like to see NHSRP produce estimates, based on the assumption that 50% of the commuting traffic along I-93 ride the train rather than drive, for each of the factors above.

I have noted [Concord Monitor letter to the editor Jan 8, 2010] that China made the decision to invest \$300 billion over the next decade to build a national hi-speed rail system. That decision was motivated by the conclusion that investing in the automobile and airplane infrastructures was environmentally untenable. Germany's economic future for the decade is almost assured as the leading provider of technology to China. The benefits of a substantially improving our rail infrastructure are difficult to quantify because it is difficult to predict how passengers may respond if good rail service is provided. Just as when people realized what tasks personal computers can be used for, the prediction that "no one would ever want a personal computer" was totally

falsified – so, too, if good and affordable rail service is provided, one does not need to worry about increasing demand - it will be irresistible.

3. A citizen of New London, NH, I would like to see the following in NH passenger rail:

- Train travel to Boston from New London to some station along the Concord to Boston I-93 corridor.
- This is a more reasonable long-term solution than widening I-93. I propose exploring placing rail along I-93, shrinking the width of the interstate to make room for rail.
- Train travel to New York City or Montreal, Canada by train from New London to a station along the AMTRAK route from New York towards Montreal (possibly White River Junction or Claremont Junction)
- I find it scandalous that the United does not have rail transport to Montreal, the capital of Canada, its close neighbor!

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It must be that the federal government requires States to update their rail plans .The State of New Hampshire has no interest in reviving rail transportation .The NH DOT is part of the problem .The City of Lebanon is attempting to impose an unneeded paved bike path on the NH DOT-owned Northern Railroad.The former NH Transportation Commissioner supports this ill-conceived proposal .

Just last week, the Quebec Premier expressed his support for passenger rail service from Montreal to Boston "... Thru New Hampshire." Instead of supporting this NH DOT wants to see a great deal of money invested in a bike path within a rail line, which may have to be removed upon six months notice . This is insane .

I ask that the new NH DOT Commissioner review the " decision" of his predecessor regarding the path use of the Northern Railroad in Lebanon .

NH DOT should be working to get recreational vehicles off of New Hampshire rail corridors .In Laconia, the City is pursuing an expensive bike path within the rail corridor from Lakeport to The Weirs, when the parallel NH 3 on the east shore of Paugus Bay lacks adequate AASHTO standard bike lanes .The current estimate for the Laconia bike path is ten million dollars ( see [www.wowtrail.org](http://www.wowtrail.org)). This is irrational.. Why does the NH DOT allow itself to be captured by ignorant special interest groups ?

The current NH DOT attitude towards rail corridors in New Hampshire can be described as " anything -but -rail". As recreational use of the rail corridors increases, it becomes more and more politically difficult to revive rail use of those corridors .We need freight and passenger rail service now.We do not need public investment in recreational purposes in rail corridors .

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